

# THAMES DITTON **TODAY**

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Sunday 30th November 3pm - 6pm



THE MAGAZINE OF THE  
THAMES DITTON & WESTON GREEN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

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The Magazine of the



Thames Ditton  
& Weston Green  
Residents' Association

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# THAMES DITTON TODAY

Published quarterly since 1970

## **In this Issue:**

News from the Residents Association .....	7
Update from your Residents' Association Councillors at Elmbridge Borough Council .....	12
Update from Nick Darby, Surrey County Council.....	15
Would you like to become an RA Councillor .....	17
Two local authors publish their first books.....	19
2025 Christmas Fair pull-out programme.....	23
White Church restoration and repainting completed .....	30
Weston Green archive milestone .....	31
Nature and Climate Festival 2025 round-up .....	35
New re-cycling station at Vital Village .....	37
First youth pastor for St Nicholas' Church .....	39
Autumn Crossword Solution.....	42
Winter crossword .....	43
Services, Clubs, Societies and Groups.....	44
Vera Fletcher Hall winter theatre productions .....	46

**Cover:** A colourful, seasonal display at The Secret Garden florist in  
Thames Ditton High Street. Photo by Andy Anderson.

**[www.residents-association.com](http://www.residents-association.com)**

Officers and staff of the Association are volunteers, but we must fund costs of this magazine, administrative and election expenses, and other expenses such as spring bulb-planting and village Christmas trees. The subscription is only £5 per household. If you can contribute more, please do so. Subscriptions can be paid via our website **[www.residents-association.com](http://www.residents-association.com)**; subscriptions (in an envelope please) may be left at View, 34 High Street, Thames Ditton or Thorkhill Road Pharmacy, 94 Thorkhill Road, Thames Ditton. Or mail to Membership Secretary Peter Haynes at 6 Onslow Gardens, Thames Ditton KT7 0JJ. Thank you.

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# THAMES DITTON AND WESTON GREEN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

## About the Association

Founded in 1934, the Residents' Association is a strong, locally based non-party-political organisation, concerned with protecting the amenities and furthering the interest of residents.

We work to preserve and enhance the best in our attractive environment and the quality of life of everyone in our community.

Through regular meetings, social activities, our magazine and website we keep in touch with residents' views and we raise and spend funds for the benefit of the community, from tree and bulb planting to contesting unacceptable development projects.

With six Residents' Councillors we have a strong voice on Elmbridge Council, working with other residents' councillors to ensure that decisions are based on the needs of local communities and on good management, rather than on party politics. Our Residents' County Councillor, Nick Darby, represents our views at Surrey County Council.

### President: Martin Wilberforce

7 River Avenue,  
Thames Ditton 020 8398 4732

### Vice President: Ruth Lyon,

11 Riversdale Road,  
Thames Ditton 0208 398 3396

### Vice President: Tannia Shipley,

27 Lower Green Road, Esher 020 8398 2484

**Surrey County Councillor: Nick Darby,**  
12 Basing Close, Thames Ditton 020 8398 2382

### Thames Ditton Borough Councillors

Alex Batchelor, 12 Hayward Road, Thames Ditton	07710 943140
Caroline James, Laurel Cottage, 20 High Street, Thames Ditton	07970 672723
Elaine Sesemann	07801 943392

### Hinchley Wood & Weston Green Borough Councillors

Gill Coates, The Oaks, Orchard Gate, Esher	020 8873 3040
Janet Turner, 2 Montgomery Ave, Hinchley Wood	020 8398 1565
James Crawshaw	07500 688632

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Highways, Drainage: Andrew Roberts, 1 Boyle Farm Road, Thames Ditton andrew.roberts9919@gmail.com	
Flooding: Tony Thompson, Willow End, River Bank, Thames Ditton	07736 677671



## THE NEXT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION OPEN MEETINGS ARE

Tuesday 25 November at 8pm - Vera Fletcher Hall

Tuesday 27 January 2026 at 8pm – Vera Fletcher Hall

Tuesday 17 March 2026 at 8pm – Vera Fletcher Hall

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# The latest news from the Residents' Association



## Christmas Lights in Thames Ditton High Street

The Residents Association will be organising and installing the Lime Tree Christmas lights and the Christmas trees above shops and businesses along Thames Ditton High Street. The RA has also been successful in its bid to be included in the Elmbridge Borough Council Christmas Lights on lampposts contract to run from 2025 to 2029 inclusive. However, this cannot start until 2026 because the lampposts don't have commando sockets, and these are needed for the lights. Unfortunately, the contractors are unable to carry out this work in time for the festive period 2025 but have confirmed the necessary adaptations will be made, at EBC expense, to enable the lights in the High Street to be fully operational for Christmas 2026. This year's Christmas Fair takes place on Sunday 30 November. See insert in the middle pages for full details.

## Parking in Thames Ditton

A reminder! During the festive season do use the Ashley Road car park when shopping in the village. The first 30 minutes of parking is FREE! This Elmbridge Borough Council initiative aims to encourage us to shop local and support our High Street. Please use it!

## Fountain light shines again

After many months of encouragement from RA Surrey County Councillor Nick Darby and RA Highways lead, Andrew Roberts, Surrey Highways recently completed work to install a new light at the Fountain roundabout, including new electrics to ensure it is lit every night. In the meantime,



Pictured Andrew Roberts (left) and Nick Darby sisters Rebecca and Elizabeth Staveley-Taylor, who look after planting around the Fountain, have given it a splash of colour by planting winter cyclamen.

## Vital Village Community Garden wins prestigious RHS award

Vital Village has won a Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) Britain in Bloom award in the 2025 'It's Your Neighbourhood' category for the South and South-east of England. It was awarded a level 4 (Thriving) for its beautiful community garden where produce and flowers are grown next to the Community Shop. The garden is the brainchild of Beth Rochford who said: "I am delighted to receive this award on behalf of everyone who has been involved



Pictured with the award at the presentation at Wisley are RA Councillor Elaine Sesemann (left) and VV's Jodhi Hutchins (right) with one of the RHS judges, Molly Louise Klemova-White

in creating and maintaining the community garden." The Vital Village Community Garden was started in July 2024. Volunteers are engaged in a community partnership of local people using environmentally friendly resources such as use of peat free compost, composting, perennial planting to provide year-round food and sharing knowledge, skills and resources to multiple generations.

## Any Questions broadcast from Weston Green

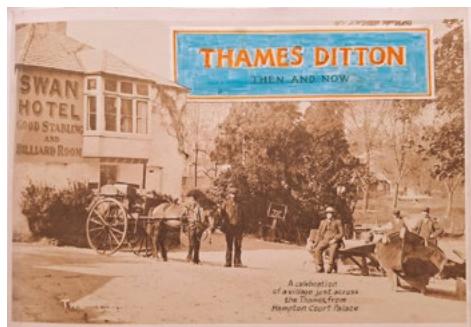
All Saints Weston Green played host to the popular BBC Radio 4 political debate 'Any Questions?' in late October. Presented by Alex Forsyth, a lively local audience listened to panellists, Shadow cabinet minister Mims Davies MP, convenor of Stop The War Coalition Lindsey German, the Minister for School Standards Georgia Gould MP and Spectator assistant editor Isabel Hardman. Questions covered a wide range of topical subjects with the biggest cheer of the night being for the panel's views on whether it would be better for Britain if the then Prince Andrew emigrated!



Pictured at the BBC's Any Questions from left to right are local questioners Nigel Scott, Karen Bowles, Claire Potter, Jacqueline Gaskell, Judy Tilson and Nick Edstrom

## Books published by residents

**Thames Ditton Then and Now** is a new publication written and produced by Edmund Woolley covering his life and observations in words, photos and his own paintings of living in Thames Ditton over the past 30 years. **Live Life Better** has been written by the Nature & Climate Festival Founder – and RA Councillor - Gill Coates to encourage people to lead more sustainable lives with advice, tips and tricks on how to do so. Go to pages 19 and 21 to read about their journey to becoming local authors.



Thames Ditton Then and Now



*The Vera Fletcher Hall will be staging One Christmas Carol, with local actor Gwithian Evans giving a one man tour de force delivering Dickens' timeless tale through the eyes of thirty characters. The production takes place on 13 December. See page 46 for this and other productions.*

## Men in Sheds appeal

In its 10 years of operating next to the former TD Community Centre, Thames Ditton Men in Sheds (TDMiS) has been an organisation of real value, both to its members and for the products they have made - seen in many places around Thames Ditton. Now, after a 1½-year gap in its operation they hope to be back in business soon in a 'new' shed adjacent to St Nicholas church hall. To do so they need to raise £5,000 to refurbish the shed and make it suitable for their purpose. To donate go to <https://www.justgiving.com/page/thames-ditton-men-in-sheds-1>

## Milbourne Pond cutback

Many thanks to all the local volunteers who turned out for the RA-organised Milbourne Pond vegetation cutback on Sunday 2nd November. With the warm summer we have had, this has become an annual event to clear away the vigorous growth of brambles and pussy willow that threaten to take over the area around the pond. The residents hard work will allow continued access to this lovely part of the green - for all to enjoy.



*The volunteers pictured above the pond*



*Ember Bowls Club, founded in 1950, brought its 75th anniversary celebrations to a conclusion with finals in a variety of competitions, including the inaugural Leightons Cup. Pictured are the winners of the various trophies.*

## Dates for your diary

**Thames Ditton Christmas Fair**  
The High Street, Sunday  
30 November (3-6pm)

**All Saints Weston Green**  
Thursday 4 December  
Christmas Crafts and Carols;  
Saturday 6 December 7pm:  
The Whyte Effect  
- Christmas Choral Concert

**Vital Village Christmas Fair**  
Saturday 6 December

**Farmers' Market**  
2025 Christmas Market,  
14 December. Otherwise on  
4th Saturday of each month.  
Mercer Close Car Park.

**Weston Green Litter Pickers**  
Meet at Marneys pub on the  
first Saturday in the month  
at 10.30am

**Thames Ditton Litter Pickers**  
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# Update from your Residents' Association

## Thames Ditton Ward



Elaine Sesemann  
TDWGRA



Caroline James  
TDWGRA



Alex Batchelor  
TDWGRA

### Planning Update

**The application for an Aldi supermarket on Portsmouth Road, Thames Ditton,** is not likely to be heard by the Planning Committee until the New Year. The Environment Agency has objected to the application as the development will take place on a culverted section of the river Rythe. The RA has also objected. The application reference is 2025/1182.

**Development at Bransby Lodge, St Leonards Road, Thames Ditton:** A new application has been made to develop Bransby Lodge under reference 2025/2218. The plans are to demolish the existing house and build a terrace of 3, two-storey houses with rooms in the roof at the front of the site, together with an access road to rear, with parking, and a two-storey building containing a pair of semi-detached houses towards the rear. The RA will be looking at the proposal carefully to see if the previous reasons for refusal upheld at appeal have been overcome.

### Housing development at Hill Park

**Roses, Long Ditton:** Although this proposed development is not in Thames Ditton or Weston Green, it is a large development of some 150 homes, which would inevitably have an impact on our local area. The reference number of the application is 2025/2018. Surrey Highways have expressed concerns about the development (see Nick Darby's comments on page 15) and the RA has also objected on highways grounds.

### Connected Communities

The Council received eleven expressions of interest from community groups and charities who were interested in taking on the six council community centres. By the closing date there was at least one expression of interest for every centre. The centres are currently primarily day centres for the elderly, serving just 1 per cent of our community, and the aim of Connected Communities is to hand the buildings to community groups or charities so that they have control over their future and can help shape a wider range of activities for the whole community, not just

# Councillors at Elmbridge Borough Council

## Hinchley Wood and Weston Green Ward



Gill Coates  
TDWGRA



Janet Turner  
HWRA



James Crawshaw  
HWRA

the small number of current users. Interested parties had until 14 November to put in their formal proposals. These are now being assessed against a framework of criteria agreed with a Residents Panel. Successful ‘bidders’ will be able to lease the centres for a peppercorn rent and will receive a grant of £131,000 to get up and running. The transfer to the new operators is likely to happen at the beginning of April 2026. The six centres are in Hersham, Molesey, Weybridge, Walton, Cobham and Claygate. The council’s other centre, Thames Ditton, was transferred to Vital Village CIC in a similar exercise in 2024.

### **All change for Surrey Councils Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) - an update:**

The Government announced at the end of October that Surrey County Council and the 11 Surrey Districts and Borough Councils will be replaced by two unitary authorities in April 2027, to be called East Surrey and West Surrey. Elmbridge will be in East Surrey. To facilitate this change, there will be elections for councillors for East Surrey on Thursday

7 May 2026. From May 2026 until March 2027, East Surrey will run alongside the existing councils, and will be putting the staff, buildings, and structures in place to start delivering all council services from April 2027. Residents in Thames Ditton will be voting for two councillors, for the Thames Ditton and East Molesey Division, and residents in Weston Green will be voting for two councillors in the Long Ditton, Hinchley Wood and Long Ditton division. The government also announced that £500m of Woking Borough Council’s debt will be repaid by central government because ‘even after rationalisation of Woking’s historic assets, there is significant unsupported debt held by the Council that cannot be managed locally’.

### **Shrub removal at Queens Road**

**Gardens:** Shrubs have been removed from the Queens Road gardens due to subsidence issues to neighbouring properties. Councillors are working with the Green Spaces team to returf the area and tidy up this small park. The graffiti on the sign is being removed at the time of going to press.

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# Update from Nick Darby, our Surrey County Councillor



I am pleased to report on a continuation of road safety improvements for pedestrians and drivers in Thames Ditton and Weston Green being made by Surrey Highways. White lines have been repainted, as well as on humps, on Embercourt Road and after a very long time, on the mini roundabout at the end of Speer Road where it meets Summer Road. There is also a new No Entry sign, to stop drivers taking a 'short cut' before the railway bridge and turning right off Station Road and into Speer Road. New 20 mph speed roundels on Station Road, are also due to be installed.

As highlighted in the Autumn edition of TD Today, I can confirm that after an eight year wait, Surrey Highways will be resurfacing the entire length of St Leonards Road - from the fountain roundabout to the Portsmouth Road – in the current financial year. Looking ahead to the financial year starting next April, I have included in my budget allowance, for work to go ahead on resurfacing Church Walk as well as for the footpaths on Lower Green Road, between Ember Lane and the railway bridge.

## Planning

Residents will be aware of the threat posed by housing developments in Elmbridge. For example, while One Tree Hill in Long Ditton has been designated as 'Village Green' to protect the land from future development, this does not include the other side of the hill where Taylor Woodrow recently made an application to develop the Hill Park Roses Nursery area with a possible 150 houses.

I have noted comments made by Surrey's



*Surrey County Councillor,  
(The Dittons) Nick Darby*

County Highways Authority (CHA) in relation to the application, which considers the proposal unsustainable. Its strong objections include poor local unsafe roads, unsafe access to the development, no local public transport and a lack of suitable access for residents to make journeys on foot or cycle. In addition more than 600 objections have been made with Elmbridge Planning Department, while the Residents' Association and I have objected too.

## Local Government Reorganisation

As mentioned in the RA Councillors' report on the previous pages, the Government has now come to a decision on the future of Local Government in Surrey. As readers will know, after eight years and due to my failing eyesight, it has been my intention to stand down from serving the local community. But I do hope to hear from anyone who would consider standing and representing the Residents' Association on the new unitary authority when the elections are held next May.

**Nick Darby**  
Surrey County Councillor for the Dittons  
020 8398 2382

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# Looking for a challenge to serve your community?



## Could you be the Residents' Association Councillor in the new East Surrey Authority?

As written about in previous editions of this magazine, the Government announced in February 2025 that the county of Surrey will be in the fast-track lane to be reorganised at local government level. Elmbridge, Mole Valley, Surrey County Council along with other stakeholders proposed a 2 unitary system as the most sensible option. On 28th October the Government announced that they had decided that, whilst there were some merits to 3 unitary authorities for Surrey, 2 authorities would be the most financially viable and more likely to deliver the targets they have set for the county. Subject to a vote in parliament later this year, a new East Surrey Council will be operational from May 2027.

## What does this mean for Thames Ditton, Weston Green and East Molesey?

Elmbridge Borough Council and Surrey County Council will cease to exist from May 2027. Clearly it is not sensible to have a

cliff edge closure of the current structure, so it has been decided that a shadow authority will be created to run alongside the current authorities from May 2026. Elections will be held for this shadow authority for East Surrey (Elmbridge, Mole Valley, Epsom and Ewell, Reigate and Banstead, Tandridge) which is where you may come in.

### How can I become involved?

The Thames Ditton & Weston Green Residents' Association is looking for people who may be interested in standing for the new East Surrey Council for the new electoral divisions of East Molesey and Thames Ditton, or Long Ditton, Hinchley Wood and Weston Green. A Residents' Association councillor is independent of national party politics. Being a councillor certainly has its challenges however it is also fascinating and rewarding. You have the power to influence decisions that directly affect your community and can see the results of your labours in your own area. Councillors often talk about the immense satisfaction they have giving something back to their community. It requires all your problem solving and negotiation skills – plus some patience and humour. It can be personally fulfilling knowing residents have put their faith in you to serve the community. If you would like to have a 'no strings attached' conversation then please get in touch with me, Alex Batchelor, via [chairman@residents-association.com](mailto:chairman@residents-association.com) or contact any of the other current RA councillors, who are listed on page 5 of this magazine

**Alex Batchelor, Chair**

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# Two local authors publish their first books



*Julie Royce talks to Edmund Woolley and overleaf, to Gill Coates, about their contrasting stories*

## Thames Ditton Then and Now

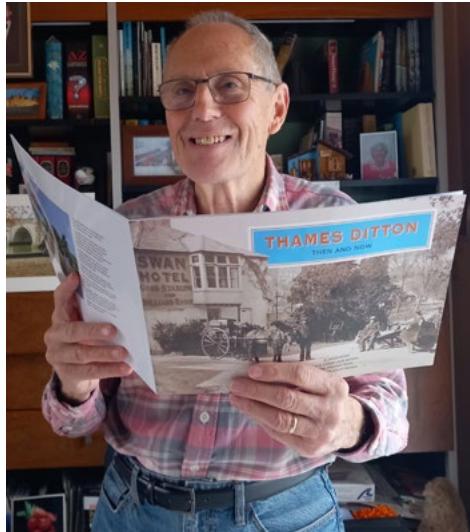
Originally from Chorlton-cum-Hardy near Manchester, Edmund Woolley came to Thames Ditton in 1983 after moving south for a London based graphic design career and meeting the love of his life Dorley.

Since his retirement, Edmund has enjoyed developing his illustrative skills and knowledge of local history. He takes photos and uses acrylic paints to recreate local scenes in his home studio. It was while painting Picton House and learning about its history that he mused on the possibility of producing a local history book of his beloved Thames Ditton. He knew that Twickenham, Long Ditton and even his home town of Chorlton-cum-Hardy, all had their photo books illustrating scenes from the past, so why not Thames Ditton?

After a three year journey, researching, illustrating and even knocking on people's doors to ask questions about local features, Edmund has now published his A4 book in full colour with 24 pages and a glossy cover. It features 3 of his paintings, old black and



*His inspiration for the book, his painting of Picton House.*



*Edmund with his book in his studio.*

white photos alongside new colour ones, maps from 1897 and 1912, and a mixed narrative of personal musings about a photographic scene, quirky titbits of information and factual history highlights. It's an easy read and a good introduction to our local history – especially for anyone new to the area.

Edmund said: "The book is not intended to be a comprehensive history of Thames Ditton. It's my own personal story in words, photos and paintings, of life in the village from the past to the present day, I hope people enjoy it."

Buy as a gift or for yourself from The Ironing Board (next to Budgens) and other outlets in the High Street displaying the poster. It costs £10 and Edmund donates £1 to Guide Dogs for the Blind for every copy sold.



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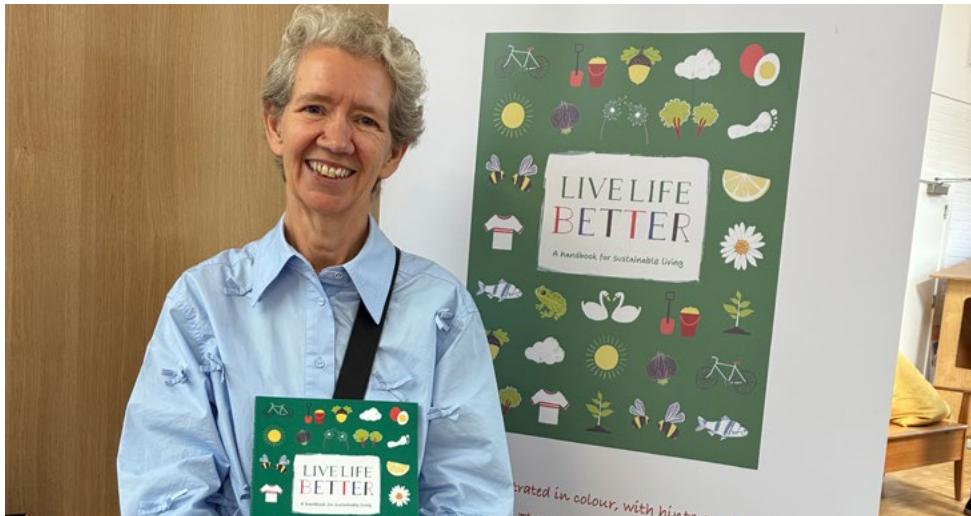
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Gill is pictured with *Live Life Better*

## Live Life Better

Back in 2022, Gill Coates had an idea for a Sunday afternoon event to engage local people in climate action. With the help of environmentalist Lucy Siegle, and colleagues Caroline James and Katie Randerson, it quickly mushroomed into a three day Nature and Climate festival that has been brought to Thames Ditton. The fourth event took place in October.

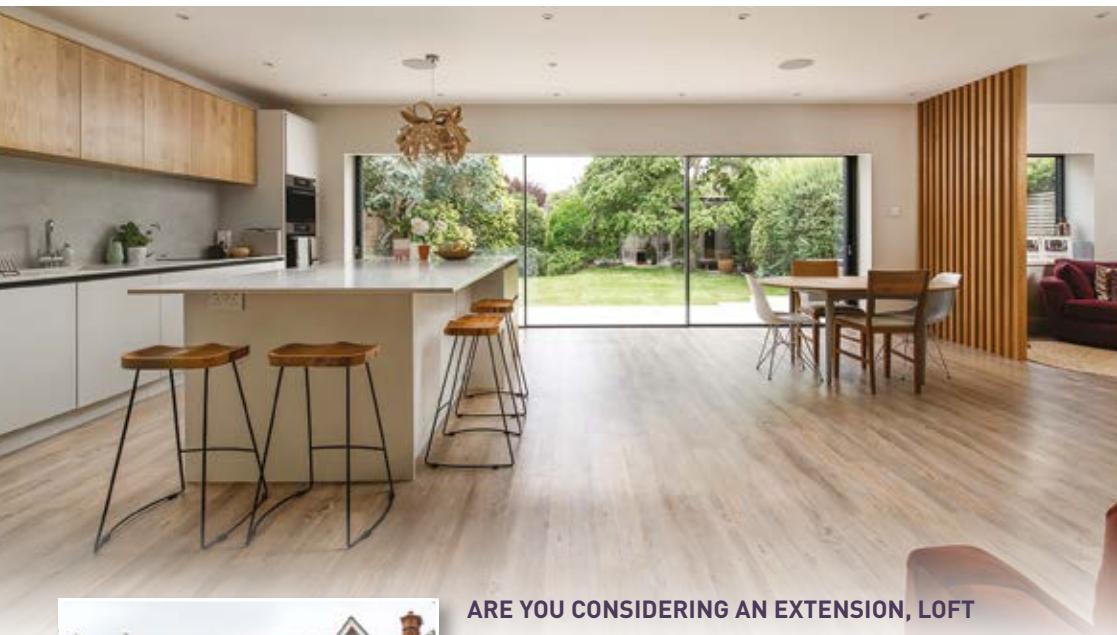
More importantly, during these festivals, masses of high calibre expertise and learning has been shared, and in some cases acted upon. Now, even if you were unable to attend this year, you have FREE access to it all at the click of a button!

Gill has co-ordinated and authored a book which captures all that learning over 20 chapters, containing local context and practical tips. With a grant from Elmbridge, the willing input of all the festival experts and the talents of local artist Lisa Tolley and web designer, Jackie Bourne, it has been produced to a very high quality.

Its tone is about making an impact where you live – and tells us why even small steps matter. The aim of the book is to demystify, make it all a little less daunting and encourage us to take actions that are meaningful for us to see improvement in our nature and climate locally, benefit from savings or better health. Chapters cover everything from A Healthy House to Wildlife. It may please you to tick off things you already do – but you are bound to find something you can add or maybe discover a new area where you can make a start.

Use the QR code below (or visit [heyzine.com/flip-book/9a72312c78](http://heyzine.com/flip-book/9a72312c78) to dip in. Perhaps start with chapter 3 where 'Take the Jump' have worked out the six most important things we can do. It's colourful, it's engaging, it contains new information and it's FREE! Share it with others and if you like it so much you want the paperback, or to give as a Christmas gift, you can print-to-order from Amazon for £16.





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# Christmas Fair

Thames Ditton High Street



**Sunday 30th  
November  
3-6pm**

love thames ditton  
**shoplocal**

Headline sponsor

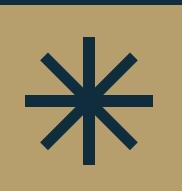
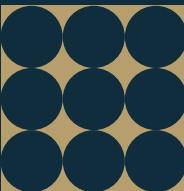
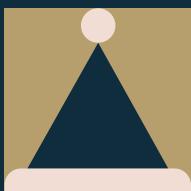
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# A traffic-free High Street

## The resident shops will be offering:

- ❖ Ivy House Nursery – Santa's Grotto and face painting
- ❖ Thames Ditton Bakery – festive bakes and cakes
- ❖ HJC
- ❖ Humphries IFA – mulled wine
- ❖ Sharm
- ❖ Thames Ditton Brewers – beers and gift packs
- ❖ Hamilton Gold
- ❖ Nice Buns
- ❖ La Fontana – Pizzas and delicious deli food
- ❖ Thames Ditton Gin – hot ginger gin and Xmas Thames Ditton Gin Gifts
- ❖ View Gifts – Christmas cards and gifts plus our almost famous Malbec® Mulled Wine
- ❖ Red Lion – fire's on, come in for refreshment
- ❖ Costa – coffee and pastries
- ❖ Paull's – Christmas trees!
- ❖ George and Dragon – beer, wine and Xmas cheer
- ❖ Joanne's Nails
- ❖ The Rose
- ❖ Coffee Pot
- ❖ Secret Garden Florists
- ❖ Budgens
- ❖ Thames Food and Wine
- ❖ Cyclelink – hook the duck with a cycling twist!





# full of Christmas cheer

Meanwhile, there will be visiting stalls offering:

- ▶ Sassy Apron – cakes and sweet treats
- ▶ Planet Warrior Kids Club – Kids games
- ▶ Boomerang Bags
- ▶ Paul Foster BBQ – delicious BBQ and burgers
- ▶ Kell's Kitchen – Travel inspired street food
- ▶ RNLI
- ▶ Rowan School – kids games
- ▶ Candy Floss
- ▶ G Whizz Kitchen – Gourmet pies and artisan cheeses
- ▶ Silver Sprite – local jewellery and gifts
- ▶ Lisa Tolley – local artist gifts
- ▶ TD Pottery Shed – locally made pottery
- ▶ Brownies – hot chocolate and games
- ▶ BouGee cocktail and prosecco bar

... plus many many more

Music and more – the stage, in the centre of the High Street, will be the main focus of the entertainment throughout the afternoon – featuring the Ember Big Band and other local musicians and choirs.

Cheer Santa as he switches on the Christmas lights at 5pm

# Thanks to Ember Big Band and all of our wonderful Entertainers

... and everyone else who takes to the stage and the street, showcasing their fantastic talent, free for the benefit of the community.

## Thanks to all our Fair sponsors/supporters – we couldn't do it without you!

The Thames Ditton &  
Weston Green Residents'  
Association  
Cllr Nick Darby and Surrey  
County Council  
Elmbridge Borough Council

Cyclelink  
Ivy House Nursery  
Thames Ditton Gin  
HW & TD Probus Club  
Rowan Preparatory School  
Thames Ditton Today

View Gifts  
The Set Up Graphic Design  
Vital Village  
Planet Warriors Kids Clubs  
Knight James  
St John's Ambulance



The Thames Ditton High Street Christmas Fair 2025 is organised  
by The Thames Ditton & Weston Green Residents' Association –  
thanks to everyone who has made this possible.



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## Comfort and wellbeing of residents

The main house boasts grand reception rooms including the magnificent first floor library and ground floor cinema room, private dining room, lounge lounge, hair salon, and nail clinic. There

is a dedicated activities room with an extensive programme of events for residents' health and wellbeing. We are dedicated to creating a home away from home where all residents are cared for with true enthusiasm and love.

Our main priority is to continue to provide eventful days, to fulfil dreams in a kind and giving way, and to make sure all our residents get to embrace their personalities. Our friendly team are focused on ensuring everyone's wishes and own individual needs are met. Our passion is to provide expert care with a personal touch and to create the safest environment possible for the people living in our community.

## Pastimes and mealtimes

At Thames View there is a range of pastimes whether that's social, creative or physical to encourage good mental health. We help to ensure everyone has a purpose to their day, it's their life and they choose the way they want to live it.

We understand the importance of good nutrition and hydration. Of course, dining experiences are not only generated by the food eaten, the company and atmosphere can completely define our enjoyment. This is why we tailor the experience for everyone and welcome families and visitors to dine with us too.





## Choice and independence

When it comes to individual bedrooms, we help our residents to put their unique stamp on their room and keep things just how they like them. All bedrooms are ensuite and have delightful furniture and furnishings. Our home is surrounded by beautiful landscaped gardens with several rooms having access to the gardens directly from their room.

Our bistro is perfect for socialising with family and friends and has a kitchen area for making drinks. For alone time there are quiet nooks with comfy armchairs, classic novels and books on the shelves.

Our ground floor cinema room is just the ticket for the weekly film club and our private dining

room gives the space for friends and families to come together to celebrate key milestones.

## Local community events

We host a range of regular events that the local community are welcome to join including our weekly coffee morning and monthly dementia friendly music session.

Whether you're looking for permanent or respite care, or would like more information about our events, please get in touch. We would be happy to give you a tour of our home and meet our team. Whatever your needs there is a place for you at Thames View.

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# All Saints Church gets its colour back



*Louise Russell reports on the latest news from Weston Green*



Its bright and white again! Work to repair and repaint the beautiful Grade 2 listed All Saints Church in Weston Green was completed ahead of schedule this autumn following a highly successful £100,000 fund raising campaign.

It can again be called the 'White Church' by the pond thanks to generous support from the National Lottery Community Fund, the Elmbridge Council Community Spending Board and of course countless generous donations from the local community and beyond.

The response to the appeal has been tremendous and boosted by the hundreds

of people who have come and supported a year long series of fund raising events at the church and in Weston Green which have included concerts, theatre, quizzes, our flower festival and sponsored walks.

But although the £100k target has been reached, we realise we need to keep raising funds to ensure this iconic building is maintained for future generations. We will therefore continue to have mostly free of charge fundraising events in 2026, although donations are of course welcome. Some events are shown on page 33 but in addition, do visit the All Saints website for further news.



*All Saints vicar, the Rev Richard Rugg and churchwarden, Alison Cruthers, who have led the fundraising appeal, pictured after a Thanksgiving service to celebrate the successful church restoration.*

## **Weston Green Community Archive Milestone**

In 2015 the National Lottery Heritage Fund awarded a grant of £10,000 towards a project to develop an archive collection of Weston Green. Now, after ten years of careful sorting, cataloguing and digitising by Pam Tiller, archivist at All Saints and her volunteer colleague Simon Crome, the project has reached a significant milestone.

The finalised Archives Catalogue Spreadsheet has now been submitted to Surrey History Centre along with several boxes of photographs, papers and plans for safekeeping. A total of 3513 items! In due course, this catalogue information will be added to Surrey History Centre's searchable database and the physical records will be available for interested researchers in their search room.

There are still many, many records and albums available to view in the archive room at All Saints. An archive morning was held in May as part of the events programme for Paint All Saints. It proved so popular that it



*Pam Tiller and Simon Crome are pictured at the Surrey History Centre*

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was repeated in October. A fascinating, chronological selection of photos and records of the area was on display along with a cine film spanning three decades. A further event is planned for 2026.

Pam is still collecting and adding to the archives at All Saints. If anyone has any photographs or Weston Green historical items to share, please do contact Pam [pamhtiller@gmail.com](mailto:pamhtiller@gmail.com)

*All Saints Weston has relaunched its Monday morning baby and toddler group. The new look Small Saints will be held on Monday mornings during school term time, in the Church Hall with coffee, homemade cakes and a chance to connect with other parents while the young ones play. For further information contact: [cathy@allsaintsweston.com](mailto:cathy@allsaintsweston.com)*

## Upcoming events

- **Thursday 4 December 7.30pm:** Christmas Crafts and Carols. Tickets £15  
Pre booking at [allsaintsweston.com](http://allsaintsweston.com).  
Includes fizz, nibbles and all craft materials.

## Free of charge events

- **Saturday 6 December 7pm:** The Whyte Effect - Christmas Choral Concert
- **Saturday 3 January 7pm:** Ripieno Choir Concert - 'Hey for Christmas'
- **Sunday 24 January 3pm:** See a video of Ember Big Band: Remembering Westons War
- **Friday 13 February 7.30pm:** - Bee Cassidy and Friends - 'That's Amore'
- **Saturday 21 March 7.30pm:** Singing it Back - Choral Concert

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# Nature and Climate Festival 2025 round-up



*Mayor of Elmbridge, Cllr Steve Bax, with Lucy Roshier of Killik & Co*

The fourth Thames Ditton and Weston Green Nature & Climate Festival, sponsored by HJC and Killick & Co, took place in October and attracted visitors from not just Thames Ditton but as far away as Kingswood and Epsom. Biodiversity and wildlife highlights this year included talks on **Plants for Health and Well-being** by local garden designer Gill Hall and **The Natural History of Elmbridge and its Commons** by Dave Page, former countryside officer with EBC.

Gill's beautifully illustrated talk, described by one visitor as "particularly excellent", was accompanied with a display of plants from Squires of Long Ditton and a walk round the community garden in Vital Village. Dave romped through 150 captivating slides of Elmbridge wildlife from insects to roe deer, majestic oaks

to the tiny Petty Whin, which is found in only one site in Elmbridge. He explained the importance of restoring and preserving grassland and heath habitats which have been increasingly crowded out by volunteer woodland and urban development over the last 100 years. We all left with a new appreciation of the fantastic biodiversity on our doorstep.

The 'Circular Economy' theme focused on repurposing, re-using and recycling. Walton Repair Café joined us on Sunday to triage broken items and we partnered with Relove Technology to collect redundant



*Relove's Paul Crossman and Gurjit Dhillon with some of the redundant items of IT equipment, brought in for recycling.*



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tech for repurposing in aid of our chosen charities, the Mayor of Elmbridge's charity and the David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation. We also introduced a semi-permanent Recycling Station at Vital Village (see following story)

The RA's Flood Group provided drop-in advice as part of the '**Rivers and Oceans**' theme, while the Thames Ditton Skiff & Punting Club organised a river clean-up the following week.

The '**Living Sustainably**' theme was catered for by the launch of our new handbook 'Live Life Better' (see feature on page 21).

There's nothing more sustainable than foraging for food and a few lucky people joined expert Julie Hiscox for a fascinating **Foraging Walk** to learn the secrets of the free food right under noses.

There was plenty for children too, with a litter pick and craft activity led by the Tap Dancing Pigeon of Covent Garden, a Create a Creature workshop with the David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation and a '**Binterrogation**' quiz. And for pure entertainment we enjoyed 'Music for the Environment' with Graham Cooke on his saxophone and the amazing 'We Are The Voice' children's environmental choir.

The Festival is all about bringing our community together. To find out more contact Gill Coates [gcoates@residents-association.com](mailto:gcoates@residents-association.com)

## **New Recycling Station for hard to recycle items**

We currently only recycle just over half of our waste in Surrey. Frustratingly there are lots of things that can be recycled, but the current recycling service in Elmbridge does not cater for them.

As a result, Thames Ditton now has its own **Recycling Station**, which has recently



*We Are the Voice* choir

opened at Vital Village. Aimed at helping to solve the problem of handling waste that Elmbridge cannot, this new drop-in service will take a selection of hard-to-recycle items which will then be collected and processed by specialists.

The idea for the service came to RA Councillor Gill Coates. She says: "A brilliant company called Terracycle can recycle all sorts of things the Council does not accept. When I was researching for *Live Life Better*, I realised how many things were unnecessarily going to landfill locally and I thought - we should do something!"

The result is you can now bring six common items to Vital Village to recycle. They are: Pet food pouches, Coffee pods (any make), Dental care waste (toothbrushes, toothpaste tubes, floss sticks), Eye care waste (disposable lenses, contact lens packaging, lens solution bottles), Medicine blister packs (empty) and Pringles tubes.

Each Terracycle box costs around £160-180, so it is not cheap. Gill adds: "I was lucky to get a grant from the Elmbridge Climate Change Action Fund to purchase two lots of five boxes. After that we will have to look to other options, such as crowdfunding or local business sponsorship, if we want to keep it going."



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CHAIR YOGA

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DITTON

WEDNESDAY 19.45

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# New Role at St Nicholas Church



*Lauren Randall*

Lauren Randall is St Nicholas's first youth pastor with an impressive record of working with young people over the last 12 years of her career. Lauren grew up in a Christian household and struggled with body image and self-esteem issues as a young girl. Fortunately, her local youth pastors helped her stay on track and this personal experience inspired her to take a path to do the same for others.

After over two years in Scotland and then five in New Zealand, her training has been diverse, including experience of training potential missionaries and teaching the bible to pastors in the Pacific Islands.

Lauren has learned a lot about how to bring Christian values into her work with young people. She said, 'many of us don't know how to live our faith out for the long

haul. I want to use my skills, knowledge and experience to help young people work out how they can live their lives in the context of practical Christianity.'

As a first step, Lauren is providing a place where young people feel accepted, can ask questions and feel supported at inclusive and accessible youth groups, for years 6-9 and years 10-13. They meet alternate Sundays at 6pm and supper is provided. It will be a safe place to hang out, watch a video (initially using Alpha course material), and play a few games.

If you would like to volunteer to help or want more information please contact Lauren at [youth@stnicholaschurch.org.uk](mailto:youth@stnicholaschurch.org.uk)

*Interview by Julie Royce*

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# Solution to the Autumn Crossword



Congratulations to the senders of the correct entries opened in the shuffle who win a £5 voucher to spend in local shops.

Mrs J Simeone

Cumi Mahadeva

Mary Bowen

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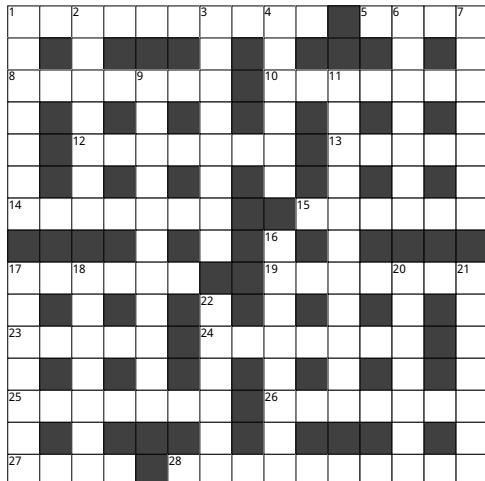
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# Winter Crossword



By Andy Howarth



## ACROSS

- 1 It seemed seas sprinkled our burger topping (6,4)
- 5 Deep sounding fish? (4)
- 8 Other halves (7)
- 10 Metallic planet? (7)
- 12 Plant pollen producers (7)
- 13 Parisian flower? (5)
- 14 Divert testers to urban roads (7)
- 15 Artist supports amended leases (6)
- 17 Explains different tastes (6)
- 19 Subtleties (7)
- 23 Prize found in a wardrobe (5)
- 24 Mwah! (3,4)
- 25 Coldness incises terribly (7)
- 26 Stag do swimwear? (7)
- 27 Captain of the Pequod (4)
- 28 Method to determine ancestry (3,7)

## Win a £10 voucher

We are pleased to announce an upgrade in the prize vouchers to £10 for the first three correct entries randomly opened after the closing date of 30 January 2026. The voucher can be used in local shops.

Please send the completed puzzle (or photocopy) enclosing your name and address with the envelope clearly marked 'Crossword Competition' to:

Thames Ditton Today  
Crossword Competition  
60 Basingfield Road, Thames Ditton KT7 0PB

Names of the winners will be published in the Spring edition, unless otherwise requested

## DOWN

- 1 Methods hidden by pansy stems (7)
- 2 Charitable backer (7)
- 3 State of left hanging? (8)
- 4 Partly broken me shin, a right tangle! (6)
- 6 In a bus I've caught, so rude! (7)
- 7 Cunning (7)
- 9 Seattle landmark (5,6)
- 11 Bob Marley mixed part of rare fantasia (11)
- 16 Multi-layered French dessert (8)
- 17 Patron saint of endurance running? (7)
- 18 Coffee bean (7)
- 20 Astronomer hid in carcass in Italy (7)
- 21 Rod Stewart's favourite sport? (7)
- 22 Dried grape (6)

# SERVICES, CLUBS, SOCIETIES AND GROUPS

## SERVICES

Cheer (Concern and Help for East Elmbridge Retired)	General Enquiries:	07895 762100 (Mon-Wed) <a href="http://www.cheer-elmbridge.org.uk">www.cheer-elmbridge.org.uk</a>
Ditton & Weston Green Neighbourhood Care	Lesley Haynes	07791 483445
<b>Elmbridge Borough Council Community Support Services</b>		
Thames Ditton Dementia Centre	Nikki Harding	01372 474526
Meals on Wheels, Community Transport, Dial-a-Ride, Alarm & Telecare services, Relief Carers	ask for service at central switchboard	01372 474552
Esher and District Stroke Club	Ann Pollock	0208398 6132
Voluntary Action Elmbridge	Sally Dubery	01372 463587
Surrey Youth and Adult Education Service	Elmbridge Area	020 8979 8334

## GROUPS

1st Thames Ditton Brownies	Vanessa Corby	1stThamesDittonBrownies@gmail.com
3rd Thames Ditton Brownies	Emily Wattret	3rdthamesdittonbrownies@gmail.com
1st Weston Green (All Saints) Scout Group		membership@westongreenscouts.org.uk
1st Weston Green Guides	Sumathi Jeevaratnam	sumathi.jeevaratnam@gmail.com
2nd Weston Green Guides		2wgguides@gmail.com
2nd Thames Ditton Guides	Vanessa Corby	2ndThamesDittonGuides@gmail.com
1st Weston Green Brownies (All Saints)		1wgbrownies@gmail.com
3rd Weston Green Brownies		3wgbrownies@gmail.com
1st Weston Green Rainbows	Lizzie Owen	westongreenrainbows@gmail.com
4th Thames Ditton Ajax Sea Scouts	Chris West	chris.west@ajax.org.uk
Dittons Scout Group	Stuart Jack	07971 479740
Emberbrook Trefoil Guild	Mary Bowen	020 8398 6857
Friends of Bushey and Home Parks	Jean Smith	020 8977 9391
Girlguiding in Thames Ditton and Weston Green		dittonsdistrict.hjh@gmail.com
Molesey and Dittons Neighbourhood Watch	Chairman: John Haberfield	020 8398 5256
Parents and Toddlers(St Nicholas church)	Information	020 8398 7211
Ripieno Choir	Nick Harris	020 8399 7231
Surrey Bell-ringers	Giles Andre	020 8979 1994
Bereavement Café	St Nicholas Church Hall	020 8398 9641
Thames Tots (Kings Church, Speer Road)	Abby Kelly	Office@Kingschurch.com

## CLUBS

Albany Motor Yacht Club	Secretary	01784466651
All Saints Weston Lunch Club	Alison Cruthers	07957 347170
Archery: Rivernook Bowmen	Nigel Harris	secretary@rivernookbowmen.co.uk
Arts and Heritage Club	Carol Butcher	01932 867511
Cercle Francais d'Esher	Brigitte Tiller	01932 860842 brigitte@ptiller.com
Claygate Bridge Club	Hon. Secretary	020 8398 1710
Colets Health & Fitness	info@colets.co.uk	020 8398 7108
Ditton Bridge Club	John Dagnall	02083984463
Dittons Skiff and Punting Club	Secretary	enquiries@dittons.org.uk
Dittons & Hinchley Wood Royal British Legion	Hon Secretary	020 8398 6263
Ember Players (Drama) Ember Sports Club	Anne Segal	07712 778357
Ember Sports Club	Caroline Anderson	secretary@embersportsclub.org.uk

Ember Sports Club: Bowls	Sylvia Jones	01932 788701
Ember Sports Club: Croquet	Simon Charrington	07917 017453
Ember Sports Club: Tennis	Annabel Duncan	0208 786 6318
English Folk Dancing Club ( Thames Ditton )	Jane Ford	07857 826668
Esher Bowling Club	Roger Cooper	01372 468109
Esher Bridge Centre	Paul Whicker	01372 460157
Long Ditton Cricket Club	Nigel Hardy	020 8398 8361
Long Ditton Garden Club	Sarah Cobb	07766 742370
Model Railway Society (Hampton Court)	Secretary	01932 241224
Old Cranleighan Rugby Club	Piers Cushing	07790 003731
Old Cranleighan Hockey Club	Simon Marshall (Men)	07801 737695
	Helen Hawes (Ladies)	07771 557900
Probus Club, Hinchley Wood & the Dittons	Edmund Woolley	020 8398 3581
Probus Club, Sandown	Julian Rye	01932 976994
Probus Club of Molesey	Martin Gibson	moleprobus@gmail.com
Probus Club of Claremont	George Cameron	020 8224 1392
River Club (BMYC)	David Walker	0870 460 3586
Surbiton Croquet Club	Alec Thomas	020 8398 2391
Stragglers Running Club	Andy Howarth	07941 242348
Surbiton Golf Club	Secretary	0208 398 3101
Surbiton Hockey Club	Secretary	020 8398 2401
Thames Ditton Lawn Tennis Club	Steve Aukett	secretary@tdltc.com
Thames Ditton & Esher Golf Club	Mark Rodbard	020 8398 1551
Thames Ditton Squash Club (Colets)	Neal Brooker	020 8398 7108
Thames Ditton Cricket Club	Geoff Dryden	07813 805 645
		Geoff.Dryden@hotmail.com
Thames Sailing Club	Mark Laity	07515 101056

## SOCIETIES AND ASSOCIATIONS

Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance	Mrs Brenda Denby	0208 398 6054
Ember Choral	Linda Bridges	020 8399 5402
Esher and Molesey Garden Society	Jean Billett	01372 465961
Esher and District Amnesty International	Cherry Eddy (Campaigns)	0208 398 4377
Hampton Court Way Allotment Association	Lettings: Piotr Hennig	020 8398 5358
Long Ditton Youth Club	Toni Izard	07749 633973
Lynwood Allotment Society	Gill Vickers	020 8398 4870
Molesey and District Antiques Society	Linda Lambert	020 8398 1476
NADFAS (Decorative & Fine Arts) Kingston	Mrs. Valerie Windsor	020 8549 9967
Oxshott & Cobham Music Society	Cherry Eddy (Membership)	0208 398 4377
		cherryddy102@gmail.com
Soroptimist Women	Jean Smith	07770 417814
Thames Ditton Women's Institute (W.I.)	Secretary	020 8398 8615

## OTHER

Vera Fletcher Hall	Lettings: Alison Black	08456 528 529
Vital Village	Lettings: Laura Pring	07511 524982
Weston Green Conservation Area Advisory Committee		wgcaac@outlook.com

**Please contact the Editor to amend these listings**

## The Vera Fletcher Hall will be focusing on the ghostly and gothic in the second half of their Autumn Season.

On **Saturday 15 November**, following the success of *The Masks of Aphra Behn*, Claire Louise Amias returns with a gripping insight into the darker side of Edith Nesbit, author of *The Railway Children*, with her award-winning performance in *Haunted Shadows: The Gothic Tales of E Nesbit*. An expert at chilling the spine and curdling the blood, Edith Nesbit relates three of her best Gothic tales while recalling her own childhood terrors.



On **Friday 5 December**, the Christmas Film Night will be presenting Lionel Jeffries' 1972 family mystery film *The Amazing Mr Blunden*. Set in 1918, the Allen family are offered the opportunity to leave their squalid Camden house and become the caretakers of the derelict country mansion, Langley Park. The plot involves ghosts, time-travelling and

redemption.

Concluding the Season, on **Saturday 13 December** the Vera Fletcher Hall is delighted to be welcoming the touring production of *One Christmas Carol* by Douglas H Baker and directed by Claire Evans, who recently brought her sell-out production of Sherriff's *Home at Seven* to local venues. A powerful one-man tour de force, delivering Dickens' timeless tale with heart and humour, actor Gwithian Evans brings over 30 characters to life onstage in a masterful display of storytelling. Gwithian Evans is a local actor who has performed at the Vera Fletcher Hall in the past and whose recent credits include playing Christopher Wren in *The Mousetrap* in the West End and the role of Tristan in Lucy Prebble's *The Effect* at the English Theatre in Vienna. *One Christmas Carol* can also be seen at The Barn Theatre in Molesey on **Sunday 14 December** at 5.00 pm.



All performances at the Vera Fletcher Hall begin at 7.30 pm. Tickets are available via the Vera Fletcher Hall website [www.verafletcherhall.co.uk](http://www.verafletcherhall.co.uk). Further details about all the venues for *One Christmas Carol* can be found at [www.onechristmascarol.co.uk](http://www.onechristmascarol.co.uk)

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# Memory Club

**Tuesdays, 10:30 am to 12:00 pm**

Worcester Park Baptist Church  
The Avenue, Worcester Park, KT4 7EW



Welcome to the Memory Club, a warm & welcoming place for people and families experiencing a condition that affects their memory, or for those who are worried about their memory.

We understand how isolating this can sometimes feel.

The focus of our Memory Club is around stimulating the brain, making meaningful connections, sparking memories and sharing stories through engaging activities.

**We have tea, coffee and cake with ample parking spaces!**

**No Need to Book, Simply Drop in  
or call [07923 157 010](tel:07923157010) for further  
information.**

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